Changes in Draft Policy on Tourism

2787. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of changes are being considered in the draft policy on tourism in order to assign high priority to the tourism sector,

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when these changes are likely to be notified; and

(c) whether these changes also include a proposal to liberalise visa norms to attract more tourists into the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) and (b) The draft national Tourism Policy has been further revised to include some of the action points relating to other Ministries like Civil Aviation, Railways, Surface Transport, Culture, Home Affairs, etc. The revised draft Policy has been circulated to all the concerned Ministries.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Tourism Scenario in Kashmir

2788. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the present tourism scenario in Kashmir;

(b) whether there has been a pick up in tourist flow in kashmir in recent years;

(c) whether several western countries have put Kashmir on the negative advisory and pinned it as an unsafe destination for their citizens; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to earase this image?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) and (b) The tourism scenario in Kashmir has improved considerably during 1998 with the revival of tourist facilities and increase in tourist traffic.

(e) and (d) Some of the countries in the West have issued advisories against travel to Kashmir. The steps taken to change the image include invitation of Consular staff from various embassies in Delhi and the travel agents and tour operators from abroad to visit Kashmir and sponsoring travel agents and houseboat owners to participate in different travel fairs and exhibitions abroad.

Casinos and Liquor Shops in Uttrakhand

2789. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the department of Tourism is opening casinos and liquor shops in Uttarakhand to attract tourists; and

(b) whether the local people view it as an act of disrespect and affront to the holy places?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Tourism in Arunachal Pradesh

2790. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State of Arunachal Pradesh figures in the tourism map of India;

(b) whether restriction like PAP and RAP have been lifted to enable free flow of tourists into the State;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) RAP system does not apply to Arunachal Pradesh. The entire Arunachal Pradesh is covered under PAP regime. The relaxation of PAP system is a continuous process. In July 1998, the